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Message Text

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ACTION IO-11

INFO OCT-01 AF-06 ISO-00 ARA-06 EA-07 EUR-12 NEA-10

CIAE-00 DODE-00 NSAE-00 NSCE-00 SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00

PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02

SS-15 AID-05 EB-07 TRSE-00 /105 W
---------- 040292
O 120035Z FEB 76
FM USMISSION USUN NY
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5822
INFO AMEMBASSY COTONOU IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L USUN 0535

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, UN, US, DM
SUBJ: GET OUT OF BENIN

REFS: (A) COTONOU 155, (B) COTONOU 167, (C) COTONOU 186

1. WE HAVE BEEN READING WITH APPALLED FASCINATION THE MESSAGES COMING IN FROM AMBASSADOR ENGLE. IN ADDITION TO THE NEWS OF THE SHOCKING TREATMENT WHICH THE UNITED STATES IS RECEIVING IN COTONOU, WE LEARN THAT THE MARXIST-LENINIST REGIME, EXPERIENCING A HOUSING SHORTAGE, HAS NOW ASKED US TO VACATE OUR CHANCELLERY BUILDING.

2. WHAT WE HAVE NOT SEEN IS A REPLY FROM THE DEPARTMENT TO AMBASSADOR ENGLE'S APPEALS. AS WASHINGTON IS AWARE, BENIN HAS BEEN AMONG THE MOST OUTSPOKEN ANTI-AMERICAN MEMBERS OF THE UNITED NATIONS, CATEGORICALLY AND LOUDLY OPPOSING US ON ALMOST EVERY QUESTION AND GOING OUT OF THEIR WAY TO BE OFFENSIVE IN DOING SO. ON THE BILATERAL SIDE, WE AT LEAST ARE AT A LOSS TO DETERMINE WHAT BENEFITS ACCRUE THE UNITED STATES BY MAINTAINING ANY DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WHATEVER WITH COTONOU.

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3. OUR ADVICE, SINCERELY OFFERED WHATEVER ITS WORTH, IS

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NOT TO SPEND ANOTHER NICKEL ON AID TRIPS TO COTONOU, REGARDLESS OF THE REASON. IF THE ZAIREAS THERE ARE PREPARED TO PULL OUT, IT SEEMS TO ME THAT OUR OWN NATIONAL PRIDE MUST BE AT LEAST ON A PAR WITH GENERAL MOBUTU'S. LET US GET OUT OF BENIN NOW. WE HAVE NOTHING TO GAIN THERE. BY REMAINING AND BEING PUSHED AROUND, OUR REPUTATION SUFFERS GREATLY IN COUNTRIES IN WHICH WE DO WISH TO STAY AND SHOULD STAY.

4. HAVE WE LOST ANYTHING BY BEING OUT OF BRAZZAVILLE? THE BENINESE WILL GET LITTLE OF WHAT THEY EXPECT FROM THE SOVIETS AND, LIKE THE CONGOLESE, SOON WILL BE PLEADING FOR US TO RETURN.

5. FROM A UNITED NATIONS STANDPOINT THERE WOULD SEEM TO BE A POWERFUL ISSUE OF PRINCIPLE HERE. THE GOVERNMENT OF BENIN, OR ONE OF ITS FUNCTIONARIES, AVERS THAT ZAIRE OBTAINED MORE AMERICAN AID BY DISMISSING THE AMERICAN AMBASSADOR. NO NATION CAN PERMIT SUCH A PROPOSITION TO STAND. AT LEAST NONE CAN DO SO AND RE-TAIN ITS SELFRESPECT.

6. ON A PERSONAL NOTE, MAY THIS MISSION EXPRESS ITS ADMIRATION FOR AMBASSADOR ENGLE'S GRACE UNDER PRESSURE. MOYNIHAN

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